



## YOUTH BANK HUB FOR WESTERN BALKAN AND TURKEY

# MONITORING REPORT ON POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN ALBANIA

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*Lack of updated official data on youth inclusion remains an issue to be addressed*

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## Summary

### *Partners Albania for Change and Development*

Partners Albania in the framework of the project “Youth Bank Hub for Western Balkan and Turkey” implemented in partnership with “Ana I Vlade Divac” Foundation Serbia, Association for Education- MLADIINFO International in Macedonia, “Prima” organization in Montenegro and “Community Volunteers Foundation” in Turkey, every 6 month issues a monitoring report aiming to give an overview and analyze the state of affairs regarding youth`s political, social and economic inclusion in Albania.

The half year report for January- June 2018 provides a brief description of the current data on political, social and economic participation of youth based on a set of predefined indicators and as well data comparison of the changing trend of relevant indicators over the 2 year overall of monitoring period.

The report data are a results of desk researches and official request for information sent to responsible institution such as: Ministry of Finance and Economy, Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, General Directorate of Taxation, General Directorate of Prisons, National Institution of Statistics and Albanian`s Municipalities. The report elaborates recommendations and advocacy initiative for future actions in regard to state of affairs on political, social and economic participation.

## Data on Political Participation of Youth

Political participation Dimension	DATA	YEAR
Young ministers in Government M/F	0%	2018
Young deputy ministers in government M/F	3%	2018
Young MPs in the parliament M/F	4.9%	2018
Young mayors	6%	2015-2018
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of government and parliament	98%	2018
On-line tools for information and participation in decision making of municipalities	67%	2018
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions/offices) on national level	0%	2018
Existence of youth structure (councils/parliaments/unions/offices) on local level	36%	2018

## Data on Social Participation of Youth

*“87% of young people graduated from vocational education institutions on 2016-2017”*

Social participation Dimension	DATA	YEAR
Young people at risk of poverty	15%	2012 <sup>1</sup>
The percentage of poor people	No data	2018
Young people in prisons	48.3%	2018 <sup>2</sup>
Young people part of social welfare system	No data	2018
PISA test - reading points 400/490 average for OECD	82.65%	2015 <sup>3</sup>
Dropout from the secondary education	3.35%	2016-2017 <sup>4</sup>
Young people enrolled in tertiary education	85%	2017-2018
Young people graduated from tertiary education	25.19%	2016-2017 <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The last publication dates on 2012

[http://www.instat.gov.al/media/1312/living\\_standart\\_measurement\\_survey\\_2012\\_revised.pdf](http://www.instat.gov.al/media/1312/living_standart_measurement_survey_2012_revised.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Request for information to General Directorate of Prisons

<sup>3</sup> The last publication dates on 2015 <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Data on academic year 2017-2018 are issued in September 2018, source Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth

<sup>5</sup> It is measured the number of graduated people from tertiary education divided with the number of students enrolled in tertiary education, source Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth

## Data on Economic Participation of Youth

Economic Participation dimension	DATA	YEAR
NEET rate	29.7%	2017 <sup>6</sup>
Youth unemployment rate	25.9%	2017
Long-term youth unemployment rate	13.8%	2017
Youth Labor force participation rate	45.8%	2017
Youth Employment rate	33.8%	2017
Young people that started their own business with the financial support of state	0.0%	2018 <sup>7</sup>
Self-employed young people	28.4%	2018 <sup>8</sup>

### Comparisons of data during 2 years of monitoring

On the third consecutive year of monitoring, the indicators of state of political, social and economic affairs have had a slight improvement. Regarding the political participation of youth on last parliament election there was an increase of 2.76 % young MPs and compare to 2015 we have youth representation of 3% of young deputy ministers. The use of online social media (website, Facebook and twitter account) as tools for information and participation in decision making processes during the 2 year of monitoring period has increased in local and central government level of 15% and 3%.

Regarding the social participation of youth, the ratio of young people imprisoned has increased from 36.5% in 2016 to 48.3% in 2018. In the same period there is a decrease of 5.5% of the youngster enrolled in tertiary education.

As per the economic participation youth indicators, there have been slightly positive changes, which results in decrease of youth unemployment rate of 7.3% and long term youth unemployment rate of 5.8 % compare to the two year monitoring period. There is an increase of 10 % of self-employed young people from the last year, taking us back to the same level of self-employment as in the beginning of the monitoring.

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*“Youth Labor Force participation ratio still remains in 45.6% level almost during the three years.”*

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<sup>6</sup> Data on youth NEET rate, Unemployment rate, Employment rate and Labor force, Instat 2017 <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3979/press-release-labour-market-2017.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Request for information to Ministry of Finance and Economy

<sup>8</sup> Request for information to General Directorate of Taxes

## Policy recommendations and issues for advocacy

One constant issue faced during monitoring of state of affairs of youth political, social and economic inclusion is the lack of statistic data on national and local level. In particular there is no updated data on youth social inclusion indicators such as: the percentage of poor people, young people at risk of poverty and young people part of social welfare system.

### Youth Political Participation

- Although on the National Youth Action Plan 2015-2020 one of the specific objectives is the establishment of Youth Counseling Board within the ministry, 2 years before the strategy implementation ending period, there is no action taken with this regard. On the other hand at local level there are some youth structures in place (youth board, commission, or offices), but still the percentage of the municipalities that have these structures is low compared to the total number of municipalities, and their role and function various from one municipality to another. The establishment of a standard model on local youth structures to be implemented should be stipulated by law.
- Political parties should improve their approach to increase youth participation in democracy and decision-making processes. There is a need to increase youth participation in executive position at local and central level. Successful models of youth leadership in politics such as young MPs, Young Mayors, and Young Deputy Ministers should be further promoted.

### Youth Social Participation

- Education is a major field of intervention through enhancement of education curricula in primary and secondary schools, including extracurricular activities such as sports clubs, arts, where youngsters can share common interests and hobbies and can be engaged in social life, thus keeping them far from crime and illegal activities. In order to raise the quality of education and simultaneously enhance social skills, social and debate clubs should be established in high schools.

- More focus should be given to career counseling, especially to the establishment of career counseling centers in high schools, provided with qualified and professional education staff for such counseling.
- There is a need for more public space dedicated to cultural and sports activities for youth.
- Reintegration programs should be in place for the youngsters in prisons<sup>9</sup>, tailored to their needs and situation. These programs should contribute to strengthen youth capacities in different life skills and vocational training, preparing them for the life out of prison.
- Assistance schemes should be in place for the returning migrants, such as creating new job opportunities, providing start-ups grants, vocational training, acknowledgement of training courses obtained abroad etc., provision of psycho-social services for their children who find it difficult to be adapted in the schools etc.

#### **Youth Economic Participation**

- One of the advocacy issues is to reduce the high level of unemployment, through strengthening mechanisms for job search and job access, investment in occupational services providing job search-skills building, and more informative online tools.
- There is a need for creation of career counseling centers not only in universities, but also in high schools, as well as research on labor market to inform students about future profession aligning their passion with the market needs.
- During the last years, promotion of vocational education and student orientation toward vocational education has been one of government priority policies. Update of vocational curricula based on labor market needs it is important, in order to ensure employment of graduated youngsters from these institutions.
- It is important to create an enabling environment for the development of self-employment initiatives, building entrepreneurial skills as well as easing access to credit. Lack of start-up funds provided by state is an issue, which has

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<sup>9</sup> Percentage of young people in prisons is calculated as number of young people in prisons divided with total number of people in prisons in Albania.

created limited opportunities for young entrepreneurs. There is not only a need to establish more start-up funds, but also to promote all the financial schemes available for young entrepreneurs in Albania. Though there is a start-up funds in support of small and medium enterprises from Ministry of Finance and Economy, there is need for more promotion of the availability of this financial scheme and more transparency for the use of funds.